

Quality Teaching and Learning

Many factors contribute to successful learning outcomes: individual ability and motivation, family background, personal choice, temperament, and so on. The school operates within these limits and possibilities. It is within its scope, however, to intensify its impact on the quality of the teaching and learning in the classroom.

The research literature on quality teaching and learning, along with the reflective experience of successful teachers, suggests a number of core principles or understandings which seem to underpin the quest for more successful classrooms. This has obvious implications for classroom-based Religious Education.

Core Understandings

Quality teaching and learning are fostered by:

Quality relationships between teacher and students, and amongst students themselves.

Positive relationships based on respect, care and genuine affection help build a supportive classroom community where individuals feel safe enough to respect the opinions and feelings of others, and to challenge themselves.

Flexible teaching approaches designed to respond to individual differences in students' needs, abilities, interests and learning styles.

Students develop at different rates, come from different social, cultural and domestic backgrounds, and have different abilities, personal traits and preferred learning styles. A variety of approaches and activities maximise opportunities to capitalise on this rich diversity.



● **The encouragement of students to engage in independent planning, thinking and learning.**

The more students take responsibility for their own learning, the more effective and meaningful this learning is likely to become.



The active engagement of students in activities which are purposeful and relevant.

Students are motivated and helped by having clear goals and in doing tasks that make sense to them.

● **Genuine interest in and enthusiasm about the topic on the part of the teacher.**

Students often take their cues from their teacher who in a number of ways, both overt and covert, defines the significance of a subject or topic.

● **Critical reflection by the teacher on his or her teaching practice, and by the student on his or her progress in learning.**

Learning is likely to be enhanced when teachers and students reflect on what is being taught and learnt, and the conditions that enhance or diminish the teaching and learning processes.

● **A classroom atmosphere that is characterised by interest, challenge and high expectations that are developmentally appropriate.**

Learning occurs when students respond to challenges to question existing ideas, to go beyond their present understanding and to develop new skills.



The assessing of student progress.

Assessment is most effective when it is based on data gathered by a variety of strategies that include self and peer assessment. Students need to know the criteria and receive feedback on their perceived progress.

● **Students being assisted to make connections between old and new experiences and knowledge, and between different areas of knowledge.**

Students develop intellectually by reconstructing mental frameworks to accommodate new experiences and concepts. They need to see their development of knowledge and skills as an integrated whole.

● **Students being encouraged to try new approaches and to solve problems in different ways.**

Students progress as learners by developing a range of thinking and learning styles which enable them to experience and integrate different ways of knowing.



● **Teachers undertaking regular professional development.**

In the area of Religious Education this includes responding to opportunities for spiritual reflection and growth as well as ongoing development in Scripture, Theology and Religious Education.

**WE BELIEVE THAT
PEDAGOGY SHOULD INFORM - FORM - TRANSFORM
AND SHOULD ADDRESS
THINKING - FEELING - INTUITIVE ASPECTS OF LEARNING**

- the needs and learning styles of students should drive our curriculum design
- provide learning experiences that cater for different students
- a knowledge-based curriculum is essential
- encourage investigative and deductive learning
- need strategies to consolidate learning
- trust the power of scripture, prayer, and tradition to engage students' imaginations
- deliberately engage the cognitive, affective and intuitive domains
- allow for individual, considered response
- continual professional learning in pedagogy and reflective practice
- use processes that promote real engagement and deep learning

